AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the present application.

Please cancel claims 1-16 and add new claims 17-31 as follows:

1-16. (canceled)

17.   (new) A method for determining the topology of modules in a modular analytical system comprising:

    a)   contacting several modules which store data in a memory with a central unit, wherein at least two modules are connected in series,

    b)   transmitting the stored data of the modules that are directly or indirectly contacted with the central unit to the central unit,

    c)   interrupting a contact of a module to the central unit,

    d)   transmitting the stored data of the modules to the central unit,

    e)   restoring the interrupted contact, and

    f)   comparing the data that were transmitted before the contact was interrupted with the data that were transmitted after interruption of the contact and determining the topology of the modular analytical system on the basis of the comparison, wherein the method steps c to e are repeated with at least one other module until sufficient information is available from the comparison to calculate the topology.

18.   (new) The method of claim 17, wherein the data are stored in a permanent memory.

19.   (new) The method of claim 17, wherein the contacting between several modules and the central unit has a star-shaped topology and the central unit can discriminate

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between the arms of the star by specifically interrupting the contacts to the individual arms.

20. (new) The method of claim 17, wherein the contacting between a module and the central unit has a linear topology.

21. (new) The method of claim 17, wherein the contact between a module and the central unit is interrupted or restored by interrupting or restoring a communication line.

22. (new) The method of claim 17, wherein the contact between a module and the central unit is interrupted or restored by interrupting or restoring the power supply.

23. (new) The method of claim 17, wherein the topology of the analytical system is displayed graphically on a screen.

24. (new) The method of claim 23, wherein operating instructions are communicated to the user which on the screen are graphically allocated to a module.

25. (new) A modular analytical system comprising:

a central unit which is contacted with several modules, wherein at least two of the modules are connected in series and the modules each comprise a memory to store data,

a switch which can be controlled by a computer unit in such a manner that the contact of a module to the central unit can be interrupted and restored again, wherein the computer unit comprises

a control unit to control the switch,

a memory to register the data of the modules, and

a computing unit to calculate the topology of the analytical system on the basis of a comparison of data that were registered

before interrupting a contact between the central unit and a module
with data that were registered after interruption of the contact.

26.   (new) The modular analytical system of claim 25 further comprising a CAN-bus.

27.   (new) The modular analytical system of claim 25, wherein a TCP/IP is used as
the protocol.

28.   (new) The modular analytical system of claim 25, wherein the data comprise a
type name to identify a module.

29.   (new) The modular analytical system of claim 25, wherein the contact between a
module and the central unit is via a line.

30.   (new) The modular analytical system of claim 29, wherein the modules are
supplied with power from the central unit via a line.

31.   (new) The modular analytical system of claim 29, wherein the communication
between a module and the central unit is via a line.